

WEST LAFAYETTE TRAFFIC COMMISSION
WEST LAFAYETTE CITY BUILDING
WEST LAFAYETTE, INDIANA

TIME: 5:00 pm, Tuesday, May 18, 2010

PLACE: Lower Level Conference Room

PRESENT:	Dave Buck	Eric Chin	John Cox
	David Downey	Carrie Ehresman	Jim Knapp
	Chris Leroux	Kathleen Mills	Karen O'Farrell
	Larry Preo	Debbie Siciliano	

VISITORS:	Beth Cook	Brad Deno	Michelle Debord
	Jonathan Ondracek	Dan Pusey	Mike Thompson

Mr. Buck brought the meeting to order and determined there was a quorum. Mr. Preo made a motion to approve the February minutes and Mr. Leroux seconded. The February minutes were approved as written.

OLD BUSINESS:

10-01 Hills and Dales Traffic Study

Mr. Buck updated the commission regarding the work has been done on the traffic study for the Hills and Dales neighborhood. This study was prompted by a citizen with speed and visual obstruction concerns. Mr. Buck handed out a packet of information (attached to minutes) and went over the information gathered so far. The engineering department is still collecting information from traffic counts, existing signage, speed studies, etc. to make a decision on how to proceed with any modifications that are warranted.

Ms. O'Farrell asked about any modifications being incorporated into the Safe Routes to School Program. Mr. Buck explained that different routes are being evaluated for new sidewalk to bring connectivity to the Hills and Dales neighborhood, but nothing has been decided yet. Adding new sidewalk could be a Safe Routes to School project in the future, though.

Mr. Buck reminded everyone that the overall concern voiced by residents in this area is speed on streets like Ravinia, Carrolton, and Hillcrest but in dealing with the speed concerns, the city does not want to create problems elsewhere, therefore the whole neighborhood is being evaluated so there is consistency with the engineering aspects of traffic control.

Mr. Leroux asked if speed could be lowered in the neighborhood and Mr. Buck stated that lowering speeds could be a result, but it is too early in the information gathering process to tell.

08-05 Mid-Block Crossings

Mr. Leroux summarized the recent pedestrian-vehicle accidents that have occurred near the campus of Purdue. He summarized the statistics from past years of similar accidents in the West Lafayette area and the information he analyzes when looking for trends in behavior, either on the part of vehicle operators or pedestrians. So far in 2010 there have been four accidents involving pedestrians on Northwestern Avenue between Grant Street and Stadium Avenue. Mr. Leroux told the commission he would have more information regarding vehicle-pedestrian conflicts at the next meeting.

Mr. Buck summarized the different considerations from an engineering perspective for the four locations being evaluated: Salisbury Street and Lagrange Street, Salisbury Street and Kent Avenue, Grant Street at the south entrance to the Purdue Memorial Union (PMU), and Grant Street at the Wood Street garage north entrance.

A mid-block crossing at Salisbury Street and Lagrange Street would require some sort of refuge island in the middle because of the distance needing to be traveled while crossing the street, however having a refuge island would disrupt either northbound or southbound vehicles making left turns at the intersection.

A mid-block crossing at Salisbury Street and Kent Avenue would cause more points of conflict with the existing entrances/exits and a refuge island would be needed because of the travel distance to cross the road. The refuge island would cause traffic to be more congested and it would disrupt either northbound or southbound vehicles making left turns.

Mid-block crossings on Grant Street at the south entrance to the PMU and at the Wood Street garage north entrance is an area where Purdue has underground tunnels that pedestrians can easily access, but there are still a lot of pedestrians who cross the street instead of using the tunnel or going to one of the signalized intersections nearby. Mr. Cox noted that the Purdue Police get several requests for some sort of crosswalk at these locations.

Mrs. Ehresman asked if jay-walkers are ticketed in West Lafayette. Mr. Leroux answered that it has not been a practice, but it may happen in the future. Right now there are too many jay-walkers (i.e. several hundred at one time) to ticket them all. Mr. Cox restated that the mid-block crossings are a four year project to cut down the amount of jay-walkers and to have pedestrians using the crosswalks all the time. Mr. Cox asked Mr. Buck to look at putting mid-block crossings on University Street at 2nd Street and 4th Street as well as on Harrison Street by the Purdue Veterinary School buildings.

10-02 Purdue Summer Construction Projects

Mr. Pusey, Mr. Cox, and Mr. Knapp, all representing Purdue, summarized the projects that Purdue will be starting this summer; however, they focused on those that impact traffic. Mr. Pusey gave a brief update on the Mackey Arena project, which has been impacting traffic on Northwestern for the past year or so, and stated there are still two years left until the project is complete.

The project to replace the tunnel top along 3rd Street at Russell Street will cause 3rd Street from west of Russell Street to west of Waldron Street to be closed until August 1st. The contractor will be keeping one lane on Russell open at all times during this project.

Marriott Hall construction is another major Purdue project that will affect traffic. State Street (SR 26) is already closed for utility work between University and Waldron. Waldron and 2nd Street is temporarily a four-way stop as well as 1st and Waldron Street. Mr. Pusey asked the commission to endorse three closures: 1st Street between University Street and Waldron Street and the sidewalk on the south side of the street; the left lane on University Street and the sidewalk on the west side of University Street; and the alley that runs north and south from State Street to 1st Street. Mr. Pusey informed the commission that while the alley is closed the users of the two properties who access their property off the alley (Hillel and LDS) will be able to park on the east side of Waldron in the angled parking. Signs will be posted to designate the parking for users of these two properties only. There are 26 parking spots in this location which is the same number of spots the two properties have combined.

Mr. Pusey stated that damage done to the streets and sidewalks being closed and used as the construction zone will be repaired by Purdue before they are re-opened to traffic.

Mr. Pusey also told the commission that the emergency response entities have met and discussed emergency response and access to all locations – all temporary routes and times have been determined and discussed; they will have access to this site and surrounding sites from both directions.

Mr. Buck asked how long the sidewalk along State Street (on the south side of the construction zone) would be closed and Mr. Pusey stated it would be closed until the completion date of the project which is July 15, 2011. Mr. Buck stated his concern of the safety issues that come up with the sidewalk being closed during the Purdue school year. Many students walk along State Street to get to and from class and the concern is that they would start walking in the street around the construction site instead of crossing the street and using the sidewalk on the south side of State Street. Mr. Deno said that Kettlehut (the General Contractor for the Marriott Hall construction) will work with Purdue to get a temporary sidewalk along State Street for the school year so this does not become a safety problem.

The streets involved in the Marriott Hall construction will be closed until July 15, 2011. Mr. Knapp made a motion to approve the traffic plan as presented and approve the closure of 1st, one lane on University, the alley, and the parking modification. Mr. Cox seconded and the motion passed.

NEXT MEETING: 5:00 pm, Tuesday, July 20, 2010, Lower Level Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D.M. Buck".

David M. Buck, P.E.
City Engineer

DMB/ec